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Security Council

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Letter dated 11 November 2003 from the Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

In accordance with Article 54 of the Charter of the United Nations, I have the honour to forward herewith a letter addressed to you by Mr. Amre Moussa, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, concerning the construction of the Israeli expansionist wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, along with an urgent plea from the residents of Qalqilya (see annex and enclosure).

I would appreciate your drawing the attention of the members of the Security Council to the present letter and its annex, and circulating them as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yahya **Mahmassani**
Ambassador

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Annex to the letter dated 11 November 2003 from the Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Cairo, 5 November 2003

I am writing to you with regard to the increasing and alarming practices of oppression that are continuously being imposed by the Israeli occupying forces upon civilians within the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Such practices have reached an unprecedented level of aggression with the construction of the racist expansionist Israeli wall causing enormous damage to the Palestinian Territories and community. In response to these belligerent acts, the General Assembly of the United Nations has recently adopted a resolution by high majority, which condemned the construction of the wall and demanded that Israel stop and reverse its construction, reiterating its opposition to the de facto annexation of Palestinian lands.

In this regard, I would like to draw your attention to an urgent and moving plea that I have received from the Palestinian residents of the city of Qalqilya, in which they describe the atrocious developments that are taking place in their devastated city as a consequence of the construction of the Israeli separation wall. Qalqilya, as they describe it, has become the largest prison in the world, its 42,000 inhabitants blocked and besieged on all four sides, with only a single eight-metre entrance controlled by the Israeli occupation forces.

While enclosing herewith a copy of this imploring plea that reflects the gloomy image of this city, I hope you will consider adopting a firm and practical position that would help relieve the residents of Qalqilya, as well as other Palestinian cities, from this siege that is being imposed by Israel.

Israel's persistence in proceeding with the construction of this wall seriously threatens to turn the whole of the Palestinian territories into one enormous jail and would destroy any remaining hope for ending the Israeli occupation that began in 1967, and the establishment of a viable Palestinian State in accordance with the Quartet's Road Map and the vision of two States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side within secure and recognized borders.

(*Signed*) Amre **Moussa**

Enclosure

[Original: Arabic]

To: H.E. Mr. Amre Moussa, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States

Almighty God has said: "And say, 'Act ye;' and God and his Apostle and the believers shall see your acts."

Sir,

We are following your kind words on satellite television and your patriotic standpoints on Arab causes in general and the Palestinian cause in particular and have the honour to send you the present urgent request and appeal for assistance from the people of the disaster-stricken city of Qalqilya with its 42,000 inhabitants which has become the largest prison in the world, having been surrounded by the Israelis with an apartheid separation wall, wire fencing and ditches on all four sides, apart from a single entrance 8 metres wide, controlled by the Israelis and opened and closed at their whim.

Israel's objective in building this apartheid wall, specifically at the city of Qalqilya which is regarded as the soft underbelly of Israel, is to drive its inhabitants away, and steal their land and water. But we tell you, Mr. Secretary-General, that, God willing, we shall resolutely remain on our land despite all difficulties. However, we address to you and to the Arab and Islamic nation this entreaty and appeal, asking you to do what you can to save this long-suffering and beleaguered city and to help its people to remain on their land and in their own homeland. May God bless you for doing so.

(Signed at Qalqilya on behalf of the Municipality)